ANCIENT SKIES

"Come Search With Us!"

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VAULTS OF TIME

BY ANDREW TOMAS*

The ancient Greeks believed that most of their myths were disguised history, and they were right. Heinrich Schliemann considered Homer's Iliad as a story of actual events and found the ruins of Troy. Arthur Evans took the legend of the minotaur seriously and discovered the Minoan civilization on the Mediterranean Island of Crete. As collective memory of the human race, legends often contain echoes of the distant past.

A myth of antiquity declares that before their return to the stars the divine civilizers of early mankind buried treasures with the help of men. In order to mark the location of their "time capsules" they raised huge monuments.

Scientific speculation has reached a similar conclusion. Dr. Frank Drake, an American astronomer, said some 25 years ago that it was possible that the visitors from space could have left artifacts under archaeological ruins. Dr. Matest Agrest, a Soviet physicist, wrote that, "We may assume that ancient astronauts took special care to preserve the evidence of their visit for the benefit of future, more enlightened generations."

Legends of the treasure of the gods are strangely similar in countries separated by great oceans and impassable mountain ranges. Hindu folklore speaks of flying Nagas, the serpent gods, who live in underground palaces and whose deep caverns store fabulous treasures illuminated by flashing precious stones.Tibetan Buddhists believe that some of their sacred books had been kept in the Naga caves after the death of the Buddha and then released to the world.Such is the old tradition of India and Tibet.

China is called the celestial empire because it was founded by the sons of heaven who had arrived in a fiery dragon from the star Regulus.The ancient books of China say that there exists a community of starmen in the Kun Lun Mountains of central Asia, ruled by Xi Wang Mu, the Goddess of the West.

The companions of this legendary Queen are said to have the ability to travel to faraway stars. A Third Century Chinese scholar, Ko Yuan, wrote that all knowledge had come to mankind from the learned immortals of the Kun Lun. A huge underground library is said to be in their possession on the border of China and Tibet.

During an expedition to Central Asia, Prof. Nicholas Roerich and his son, Dr. George Roerich, an Orientalist, saw old books in Tibetan monasteries in the 1920s which had passages about "iron serpents" that traveled in space and carried dwellers of other worlds. Roerich also wrote about a deep grotto under the Potala Palace in Lhasa, Tibet, which held artifacts of the sky gods.

In his Treasure of the Snows, Roerich describes his crossing of the Karakorum Pass. Pointing to the rocky ridge his native guides said, "Deep down there are extensive underground vaults and in them are gathered treasures from the beginning of the world."

Roerich recorded Tibetan legends about treasures buried in the Himalayas by the servants of celestial visitors. In the same book he writes, "Some have even seen the stone door which has never been opened because the date has not arrived." He added that mighty guardians protected the sacred caverns by walls of fire which destroyed all intruders.

In his autobiography Beasts, Men and Gods, Dr. Ossendowski wrote that the Lamas of Mongolia confided to him in the 1920s that the secret galleries and crypts were flooded with a soft light.

Across the Pacific Ocean, far away from Asia, we encounter similar legends.In Mexico there is a myth stating that Quetzalcoatl had buried fifty-two golden tablets containing the history of the world. When the Spanish conquistadors heard of this tale they started searching for the golden tablets but fortunately the treasure of Quetzalcoatl has never been found.

Garcilaso de la Vega (1535-1616), a descendant of the great Incas, wrote that the treasure of the Children of the Sun lay buried in the Andes Mountains. The Spaniards left chronicles about crypts under Cuzco and Sacsayhuaman. They also recorded an Indian legend speaking of an extensive system of tunnels in Peru and Bolivia.

The British author, Harold Wilkins, says that there are secret native societies in South America which guard these galleries and vaults hiding treasures, particularly the golden image of the Sun from Cuzco which disappeared during the conquest.

The chronicles of conquistadors mention a vault with a precious crystal which only kings and priests were allowed to see. These writings say that the crystal showed pictures of the past and the future.

Erich von Daniken's Gold of the Gods describes the subterranean galleries that were discovered by Juan Moricz in Ecuador, who alleged that they held metal-

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*This article is based upon the author's presentation at the Tenth Anniversary World Conference of the Ancient Astronaut Society held in Chicago on August 6-7, 1983. Mr. Tomas is an author with 60 volumes to his credit, including We Are Not the First, one of the classics in the ancient astronaut field. His latest book, Mirage of the Ages, has been published by Exposition Press, Inc., P.O.Box 2120, Smithtown, NY 11787 USA. Mr. Tomas lives at 845 East 20th Street, Chico, California 95926 USA.

Vaults of Time was also published in Pursuit, Vol.16,No.2 (1983), the Journal of the Society for the Investigation of the Unexplained (SITU). For information on membership in SITU write to P.O.Box 265, Little Silver, NJ 07739 USA.

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lic books containing the history of a vanished civilization. The walls and ceilings of these vaults are finely polished, implying that a high technology was used in their construction.

In Babylon, and the Middle East in general, we also find legends of the vaults of time.Sumerian sources state that their first kings were survivors of the Great Flood who were sent to the Near East by the sky gods to rehabilitate the human race.

The 4700-year-old Epic of Gilgamesh speaks about wise Gilgamesh who engraved on a stone the tale of the Flood. It describes the flight of gods into the sky when the cataclysm approached.

Flavius Josephus, First Century Hebrew historian, writes that before the deluge the ancients inscribed their scientific discoveries upon monuments. He indicates that one of these monuments was in the land of Syria. Actually there is a colossal stone structure in Lebanon which at one time belonged to Syria. Its name is Baalbek. The French scholar, Count de Volnay wrote in 1787 that according to Arab sources the Baalbek platform of gigantic slabs had been erected only to preserve in its vaults priceless treasures.

Gnostic mystics produced a curious book in the Second Century entitled The Book of the Cave of Treasures in which I found the following passage: "In the time of the flood Noah took with him into the ark books of hidden mysteries. They were later placed in the Mountain of Victories to the East of the country of Syria in a grotto."

Nowhere is the lore about secret vaults more abundant than in the Land of the Nile. The so-called Leiden Papyrus, dated to the First Century, was discovered in a tomb of an Egyptian priest and then taken to the city of Leiden, Holland from which it bears its name. This ritual of initiation, dedicated to Osiris, describes dark corridors and an illuminated crypt with seven doors. The ancient Greek historian Herodotus states that the God Osiris had appeared some 15,000 years before his time. He borrowed his chronology from the Egyptian priests. "They claim to be quite certain of the passage of time." Herodotus was shown 345 statues of Egyptian high priests in lineal succession beginning from the year 11,795 BC.

A Roman historian of the Fourth Century, Ammianus Marcellinus, believed in the reality of secret vaults with historical records and artifacts in ancient Egypt. He wrote about subterranean passages and chambers that had been constructed by men before the flood in order to preserve vestiges of their civilization.

The writings of Crantor, a Greek commentator of Plato (300 BC), speak of secret monuments in Egypt which contained the history of Atlantis. He said that some privileged Greeks, such as Solon and Plato, had seen them.

When the Arabs occupied Egypt in the Seventh Century they encountered copts, the descendants of ancient Egyptians. In the course of time Arabic scholars recorded coptic legends.

The works of Masoudi, Makrisi, Muterdi and Biruni, who lived in the Tenth Century, are still in existence. So are the writings of Ninth Century Arab historians, Ibn Abd Hokim and Abou Balkh. All these scholars wrote extensively about prehistoric treasures and handed down to posterity a coptic legend which I will now relate:

Three hundred years before the Great Flood a ruler of Egypt, called Surid, had a strange vision of the whole Earth turning over and the stars falling down. The King assembled his 130 priests and asked them to explain his frightful dream. The chief priest-astronomer predicted a world cataclysm.Thereupon the King ordered to be built the three Giza Pyramids in order to provide secret underground vaults. He filled them with all kinds of treasures as well as written records about the sciences of astronomy, mathematics and physics. According to Al Hokim, some very unusual things were deposited, such as iron objects which did not rust and glass that could be bent. Were they stainless steel and plastics?

It is said that mechanical statues or robots were installed in every pyramid so as to prevent anyone from entering the concealed storehouses. When everything was finished, the priests "planted invisible spirits to guard the entrances from intruders except those who by their conduct were worthy of admission."

Muterdi and other Arabic writers narrate that explorers of the Khufu Pyramid saw in its depths stone doors open and close by themselves. Flashes of light in the dark corridors were also observed.

Of special interest is the tradition of the secret fraternities of Rosicrucians and Freemasons. The Rosicrucian Manifesto printed in Germany in 1614 and addressed "To the Learned of Europe" recounts the opening of the tomb of Christian Rosenkreuz. His sepulcher had seven doors leading to storehouses. The vault was brilliantly lit by an "artificial sun" in the ceiling. This is strangely reminiscent of ancient Egyptian texts about secret crypts which the German Rosicrucians could not have had in 1614, as Egyptians hieroglyphs were not deciphered until 200 years later.

In its rituals Freemasonry maintains a tradition of an underground crypt storing priceless articles from a bygone age. In 1789, Count Cagliostro was arrested by the Inquisition for establishing an Egyptian rite Masonic Lodge in Rome. He was thrown into a dungeon where he died six years later. In his possession, Church officials found a curious manuscript written in French and attributed to another mystic, Count de St. Germain. When Napoleon Bonaparte took Rome in 1798, one of his generals reclaimed the confiscated manuscript from the Vatican. It is now kept at the Library of Troyes, France. This manuscript, expressed in allegories and symbols and written in French,bears the name of La Tres Sainte Trinosophie. It arouses a supposition that its author might have visited the hidden vault in Egypt. Section 2, with the symbol of a pyramid, states that a deep underground gallery led to a round, brightly-lit hall with crystal walls.

In his Memoirs, Count Cagliostro writes about his voyage to Egypt: "I entered such places as no ordinary traveler ever entered before." In the Trinosophie manuscript found in Cagliostro's hands by the Inquisition, there is an interesting passage: "At last I found a door that opened on a flight of steps which I descended. After a long march, I came to a chamber in the middle of which shone a crystal star."

This tradition of Eighteenth Century secret societies concerning passages and rooms under the pyramids was suitably formulated by Christian Pitois, who wrote under the name of P. Christian. He served in the French Ministry of Education in the reign of Napoleon III and was also a scholar and writer. Importantly, he was a dignitary of the Rosicrucian Lodge in Paris. His book entitled Histoire de la Magie was published in France in 1876. The book has some information about the underground vault of Giza: "The Sphinx of Giza served as the entrance to the sacred subterranean chambers. This entrance, obstructed in our day by sands and rubbish, may still be traced between the forelegs of the crouched colossus. It was formerly closed by a bronze door whose secret spring could be operated only by the Magi. In the belly of the sphinx were cut out galleries leading to the subterranean part of the Great Pyramid."

The Druzes of Lebanon and Syria also preserve knowledge about the secret vaults of Egypt. Their doctrine teaches that mankind was created by the Sons of God who came from the heavens. They revere Thoth-Hermes, the cosmic messenger. The Druzes have coded books which only five initiated chiefs own and understand. I have met two of these learned men speaking in perfect French, English and Arabic. The Druze initiates possess secret recognition signs

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and passwords like the Freemasons.

In response to my questions as to the hidden treasuries in Giza, the late Prince Kemal Joumblat replied that his oath prevented him from discussing this great mystery.However, he challenged me to disclose my own knowledge and said that he would stop me if my information was wrong. After listening calmly to what I had to say he added an important fact which I did not know. He stated that in the course of centuries initiated Druzes had left their seals and signatures on the walls of hidden galleries leading to the ancient crypt. These graffiti naturally suggest that the Druze chiefs have been inside the subterranean passages. The ancient storehouse would be opened before the end of this Century, said Joumblat. He did not deny that the Druzes, together with other fraternities, were guarding the entrances to the vaults.

The so-called Mahatma Letters, first published in London in 1923, contains a letter from a sage of the East named Koot Humi written to Alfred P. Sinnett, a British journalist in India. It confirms what I have just said. The letter was written in 1882 at a time when British troops occupied Egypt for political reasons. The Himalayan Master expressed apprehension about the British military operations which could "involve such local consequences to the body of occultists still remaining there and to what they are guarding that two of our adepts are already there having joined some Druze brethren." (XVI)

Sinnett explained the cause of this alarm in a book entitled Selected Fruits of Occult Teaching published in London about 60 years ago: "The purpose of the Great Pyramid was the protection of some tangible objects of great importance having to do with the occult mysteries. These were buried in the rock, it is said, and the pyramid was reared over them, in form and magnitude being adapted to render it safe from the hazards of earthquake and even from the consequences of submergence beneath the sea."

There is on record another alleged discovery of a secret storehouse in the Khufu Pyramid attributed to the British archaeologist Sir Flinders Petrie (1853-1942) and Dr. John O. Kinnaman, an American Biblical archaeologist (1876-1961). Dr. Kinnaman authored Diggers for Facts in 1940 in which he described his work in Egypt and Palestine, some of which was done jointly with Sir Flinders. Shortly before his death in Sacramento, California in 1961, Dr. Kinnaman confided a strange story to a local teacher, Willi Semple. During their exploration of the Great Pyramid in 1924, Kinnaman and Petrie discovered by accident a hidden vault which they entered through a gallery on the south side of the pyramid and descended to a great depth to reach it. In Dr. Kinnaman's words "it contained things you'd never believe." In a lecture which he gave some 25 years ago, Dr. Kinnaman disclosed that they saw an anti-gravity machine and thousands of enigmatic crystal prisms. The two archaeologists presumed these artifacts to have come from the legendary empire of Atlantis, which according to Plato, was destroyed by a geological cataclysm 12,000 years ago.

According to Semple's article printed in the Rosicrucian Digest, July 1962, Kinnaman and Petrie decided not to make their fantastic discovery public because "the world in general is not ready to understand and cope with this knowledge, much less really believe that it actually exists."

Admittedly,Dr. Kinnaman's story can be questioned. However, the decision of the two archaeologists to seal the vault can perhaps be explained by the tense situation in Egypt, then occupied by British troops. This revelation about an advanced civilization which had existed before the legendary flood, could have sent shock waves into the Islamic World, founded on the Koran, as well as undermined the Biblically-oriented Anglo-Saxon Culture, which Kinnaman and Petrie represented.

Now for the crucial question. Why were the Vaults of Time built? In the snowy Himalayas I received an answer which seemed very logical to me.My oriental communicator said that evolution follows a circular or spiral path passing through parallel situations in the course of cycles. This is the law of Eternal Recurrence, taught by the Buddha and by Pythagoras. The man said that, according to Hindu scriptures: Time was when mankind had a terrible bomb that shone 'like a thousand suns'. In one of his articles, Robert Oppenheimer, one of the developers of the atomic bomb, referred to this ancient nuclear weapon. Eastern folklore and sacred books state that our predecessors had destroyed themselves by triggering a vast geological catastrophe. My communicator declared that the opening of the vaults of time would come at the time of a planetary crisis as a stern warning:"What happened to that lost civilization, can also happen to you."

We have traveled a long way from the Egyptian tomb described in the Leiden Papyrus, the secret places mentioned by Herodotus, Flavius Josephus and Ammianus Marcellinus, and more recently by Arabic scholars. The legend of Maya priests watching the golden tablets of Quetzalcoatl, of the Naga serpents guarding the treasures for the sky gods in the Himalayas, and of secret fraternities protecting the treasure of the Sphinx, immortalize the lore of the Vaults of Time that must have a grain of truth behind it because of its global scope and ancient age.

The theory of the Vaults of Time gains support from the fact that we, ourselves, have buried several time capsules in this century.In 1938 the Westinghouse capsule was sealed in New York containing a large number of microfilms. In 1940, Oglethorpe College in Atlanta, Georgia sealed its Crypt of Civilization with books, newsreels, recordings and models. The people of antiquity could have done the same thing thousands of years ago.

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OPEN LETTER TO EDITORS AND PUBLISHERS IN ENGLISH SPEAKING COUNTRIES, by ERICH VON DANIKEN

Many of you have published my books and we all had great success with Chariots of the Gods? and some of the later titles, but then I was attacked by some of the media (quite below the belt in some cases) and the sale of my books declined.

Curiously enough, all this happened only in the English speaking world. Why? Because in the German speaking countries I was present to defend myself. In numerous television discussions and in the press I attacked my adversaries. I have had hundreds of lectures and discussions in public and on campuses. Each of my books was in the top five of the best-selling list for several months. My critics began to calm down and more and more the media has become more favorable to me. Similar things have happened in Spanish speaking countries; but not in the English speaking world.

Now the time is right for my books to make a comeback, because many scientists have entered the field. For example:

At the 33rd Congress of the International Astronautical Federation held in Paris from September 27 to October 2, 1982, Prof.Dr. Papagiannis, an astronomer of Boston University, delivered a speech entitled: The Need to Explore the Asteroid Belt.Prof. Papagiannis presented wonderful calculations and statistics to prove that aliens from outer space must already have visited our solar system. He believes that we would find traces of their visits in the asteroid belt. He stated: "We must therefore soon initiate this search,but we must also be careful not to neglect our solar system and especially the asteroid belt, because we would look rather foolish to future generations if we were to continue to search for extraterrestrial civilizations in far away stars when the answers could have been found right here in our own solar system."

Prof. M. Taube is working at the Eidegenoessische Technische Hochschule, Zurich, Switzerland. He published a book entitled: Evolution of Matter and Energy. After a hundred pages of calculations, he also comes to the conclusion that our solar system must have been visited at least once by extraterrestrials.

Prof. Dr. N. Vogt, of the University of Munich came to a similar result. He published the results of his researches in the scientific weekly; Naturwissenschaftliche Rundschau (May 1983).

As you know, the Nobel prize winner, Francis Crick, published his book, Life Itself, in which he states that life probably was imported to Earth by a higher civilization from outer space.

Sir Fred Hoyle and N.C. Wickramasinghe came to the same conclusion. These scientists have published in the past few years a series of books, the latest of which is entitled: Evolution from Space. They believe not only that life was brought to Earth by a higher civilization from outer space, but also that Darwin's theory of evolution must be partly wrong. This is exactly the same that I wrote in 1977 in Chapter 5 of my book: Von Daniken's Proof (According to the Evidence).

In the Journal of the British Interplanetary Society, (Vol. 36, 1983), Dr. Robert A. Freitas of the Xenology Research Institute in Sacramento, California, proposes a new project with the name of SETA. While SETI stands for the "search for extraterrestrial intelligence," SETA stands for the "search for extraterrestrial artifacts." This is exactly what I have been doing for the past 25 years.

The Soviet scientist Vladimir V. Rubtsov,of Kharkov, has suggested a new branch of science to be called "Paleovisitology," which includes any visit by extraterrestrials in prehistoric times.

More than one hundred titles have appeared on the market during the last twelve months, all of which support my hypothesis in one way or another. Most of the authors do not mention my name, but you have only to read their theories to realize the striking similarities between their thinking and mine.

All this makes it clear that editors and publishers do not have to be ashamed to publish Erich von Daniken and other authors in the ancient astronaut field, whose books are written for the mass market, rather than for the scientific community.

Now that the scientists have jumped on the band wagon, Erich von Daniken is back!

I WAS FASCINATED to see in the new book by Gerald S. Hawkins, Mindsteps to the Cosmos, (Harper & Row, 1983) that the author has developed precisely the same geometric concept as my own, relating the slope of the Giza pyramids to the sum of the angles of the Obliquity of the Ecliptic and the Latitude. This geometry was first proposed in my article "Some Reflections on Pyramid Slope Angles" in Pursuit for July 1975, and received further treatment in my contribution "More on the Great Pyramid" in the March-April 1979 issue of Ancient Skies. We are also proposing the possibility that the polished limestone faces were intended to reflect the sunlight in the plane of the Ecliptic. One pleasant result of the independent development of this approach is that I have recently met with Dr. Hawkins to discuss our ideas. He had not seen my earlier work, and said he would have referenced it had he done so. It is interesting that a geometric treatment of pyramid slope angles that first appeared in Pursuit and in Ancient Skies has also been evolved by a notable archaeoastronomer. Dr. Stuart W. Greenwood, 5004 Laguna Road, College Park, MD 20740 USA.

KARL BRUGGER, author of The Chronicle of Akakor, was shot and killed in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, where he worked as a journalist and correspondent for a German radio station.On the eve of his departure to return home, Brugger and his replacement, Ulrich Enke, came out of a restaurant and were confronted by a young man brandishing a pistol.The assailant shouted several words in Portugese, fired point-blank at Brugger's chest, and then fled.

The incident occurred on the Beach-Avenida in Ipanema. Enke was unsuccessful in getting help from passersby. He finally called an ambulance from a nearby hospital, but Brugger was already dead.

In his book, Brugger related the account of Tatunca Nara, chief of the Ugha Mongulala tribe of northwest Brazil, which claims that its extraterrestrial ancestors founded an advanced, technological civilization 15,000 years ago. Brugger's book inspired Erich von Daniken to make contact with Tatunca Nara and arrange an expedition into the upper reaches of the Rio Negro to search for Akahim, one of the underground cities supposedly built by the extraterrestrials. After three unsuccessful attempts to reach Akahim, all of which were thwarted by accident, sabotage and threats of arrest, von Daniken gave up the quest. (See Ancient Skies 4:3, 5:4 and 6:4).

Brugger had announced that he planned a new expedition to visit the Mongulala to search for the underground cities. Was the assassin sent to eliminate Brugger who knew too much? The circumstances are peculiar because the attack was directed only at Brugger.

ANDREW TOMAS' new book Mirage of the Ages is available from Susan J. McCrone, 13764 N. Birchwood, Mequon, Wisconsin 53092.

ERICH VON DANIKEN's book Pathways to the Gods?, is available in paperback from:

Berkley Books, 200 Madison Ave., New York 10016.

Corgi Books, Century House, 61-63 Uxbridge Rd., Ealing, London, England W5 5SA.